



Lindsey Lodge Hospice
COUNSELLING AND PRE/POST
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT POLICY

Contents

Page Number	Section	Content
1		Title page
2		Contents page
3	1	Policy statement
	2	Scope
	3	Roles and responsibilities
4 - 6	4	Staffing
	5	Implementation
7	6	CRUSE bereavement support alliance
	7	Measuring performance
8		Appendix one - Counselling support referral process
9		Appendix two - Pre and post bereavement referral process
10		Appendix three - Patient experience questionnaire
11		Appendix four - 6 week programme
12		Appendix five - Referral form

1. Policy statement

Lindsey Lodge Hospice provides counselling and bereavement support for its clients, families and those known to the wider palliative care team. The hospice aims to improve the quality of life for clients and their families in distressing times and in the future by providing a high standard service that meets the client's needs. Supporting clients and their families facing bereavement is an essential element of hospice care and forms part of the holistic care delivery and approach to end of life care.

This policy outlines the process which should be followed by professionals when referring to the counselling and bereavement support team alongside providing resources to guide clients and their families in understanding what the service can offer.

2. Scope

This policy is relevant for all staff caring for patients known to Lindsey Lodge Hospice and professionals within the wider palliative care team. This policy also outlines the agreed alliance between the counselling and bereavement support team and CRUSE Bereavement Care.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Director of Patient and Nursing Services is the Registered Manager for Lindsey Lodge Hospice and as such has overall accountability and responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in use in Lindsey Lodge Hospice.

3.2 The Chief Executive and Director of Patient and Nursing Services are responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate systems are in place to support the delivery and implementation of the counselling and bereavement support service.

3.3 The Well-being Centre Manager is responsible for:

- The practical implementation of this policy within Lindsey Lodge Hospice
- The general day to day management of the counselling and bereavement support team
- Ensuring staff are aware of the policy and requirements which includes new starters on their local induction
- Ensuring that any incidents relating to the counselling and bereavement support team are reported on the recognised incident reporting tool in accordance with the Managing Incidents Policy
- Ensuring incidents in relation to the counselling and bereavement support team are investigated appropriately

3.4 The Senior Nurse (In-patient unit) is responsible for:

- The practical implementation of this policy within Lindsey Lodge Hospice
- Ensuring staff are aware of the policy and requirements which includes new starters on their local induction

- Ensuring that any incidents relating to the counselling and bereavement support team are reported on the recognised incident reporting tool in accordance with the Managing Incidents Policy
- Ensuring incidents in relation to the counselling and bereavement support team are investigated appropriately

3.5 The registered Counsellor is responsible for:

- The practical implementation of this policy within Lindsey Lodge Hospice
- Ensuring that any incidents relating to the counselling and bereavement support team are reported on the recognised incident reporting tool in accordance with the Managing Incidents Policy
- Ensuring incidents in relation to the counselling and bereavement support team are investigated appropriately

3.6 Clinical staff (nursing, allied health professionals, health care assistants, advanced assistants) are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the guidance within this policy is adhered to when considering referring a client for counselling and/or pre/post bereavement support
- Ensuring any issues identified with the counselling and bereavement support service are reported immediately
- Ensuring any associated incidents related to the safety of clients and their families accessing the service are raised through the Lindsey Lodge Hospice reporting system

4. Staffing

4.1 The team includes:

- x1 registered counsellor (Band 6) employed for 22.5 hours across 3 - 4 working days
- x1 administrator/bereavement support assistant (Band 4) employed for 22.5 hours across 3 - 4 working days
- 11 bereavement support volunteers

4.2 The registered counsellor and bereavement support assistant are required to work one day together to allow for clinical caseload discussion, supervision and service development

4.3 The registered counsellor will receive regular clinical supervision from an external supervisor

4.4 All bereavement support volunteers will have received an appropriate training package provided by CRUSE bereavement support and the registered counsellor

4.5 Each bereavement volunteer will receive regular supervision from the registered counsellor

5. Implementation

5.1 Referral criteria for both counselling and pre/post bereavement support:

- Clients diagnosed with a life limiting illness, for example, Cancer, Motor Neurone Disease, Multiple Sclerosis or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (this list is not exhaustive).
- A family member of the client diagnosed with a life limiting illness
- All clients referred into the service, be that a 'patient' or relative must be aged 18 years or over
- Consent must be obtained prior to the referral
- All clients referred must be known to Lindsey Lodge Hospice either through the In-patient unit and/or the Wellbeing Centre services or under the care of the specialist palliative care team
- Self-referrals and referrals from professionals are accepted

5.2 All referrals into the service must have a completed referral form (Appendix five)

5.3 Referrals can be hand-written or typed and given to the registered counsellor and/or the administrator and bereavement support assistant via email, by hand or verbally over the telephone

5.4 Each referral will be assessed on individual need by the registered counsellor and/or the bereavement support assistant

5.5 There may be occasions when counselling and pre/post bereavement support is offered informally, for example, an incidental meet with a client and their family. If more formal support is required, a written referral must be

5.6 There may be occasions when counselling support is offered to staff members within Lindsey Lodge Hospice. The staff member may self-refer through an initial 1:1 liaison with a member of the counselling and pre/post bereavement support team and/or a referral from the staff member's line manager.

5.7 Counselling support referrals (Appendix one)

- 5.7.1 All referrals for counselling support must have a completed referral form
- 5.7.2 The referral can be hand-written or typed and given to the registered counsellor and/or the administrator and bereavement support assistant
- 5.7.3 Contact will be made with the referred client within 10 working days (this may include an initial face to face appointment)
- 5.7.4 For those clients who are at risk of harm, for example, suicidal ideation, contact will be made within 24 hours
- 5.7.5 Clients will be allocated to the registered counsellor, assistant or volunteer depending on complexity - this will be to the discretion of the registered counsellor
- 5.7.6 All documentation of care will be recorded on Systmone
- 5.7.7 The referrer will be informed when the client is discharged from the service

5.8 Pre and Post Bereavement support referrals (Appendix two)

- 5.8.1 All referrals for pre/post bereavement support must have a completed referral form (this must be scanned onto Systmone within 24 hours)
- 5.8.2 The referral can be hand-written or typed and given to the registered counsellor and/or the administrator and bereavement support assistant by email, hand, Systmone or provided verbally over the telephone
- 5.8.3 All referrals will be triaged by the registered counsellor and/or administrator and bereavement support assistant across 5 days and telephone contact made by a Lindsey Lodge Hospice registered member of staff (to confirm appropriateness) within 2 weeks
- 5.8.4 Referrals are prioritised as low or high risk. A high-risk referral includes those who may have suicidal ideation or the person who died is their main carer
- 5.8.5 High risk referrals will be contacted within 24 hours either by the registered counsellor or a registered nurse on the In-patient unit
- 5.8.6 A face to face initial assessment will be completed by the registered counsellor, bereavement assistant and/or volunteers within 1 month of receiving the initial referral
- 5.8.7 Wherever possible all appointments should be at Lindsey Lodge Hospice
- 5.8.8 Home visits can only be provided in exceptional circumstances, for example, the referee is unable to access the hospice due to immobility
- 5.8.9 Up to 6 initial appointments will be scheduled with the client. After 6 sessions the client will potentially be offered to attend the bereavement support group (this is dependent upon individual need)
- 5.8.10 Professional judgement will be used throughout the client's pathway regarding scheduling and length of contact with the service
- 5.8.11 Clients will be discharged from the active caseload and signposted to other support if/as required
- 5.8.12 Pre-Bereavement support referrals
 - Contact will be made within 7 working days (this may include an initial face to face appointment)
 - If earlier contact is required, for example, due to client deterioration, it will be the responsibility of the referring professional to express the urgency of need
- 5.8.13 Post Bereavement support referrals
 - All referrals are in conjunction with the processes completed on the In-patient unit and Wellbeing centre services
 - Following a referral for post-bereavement support, the administrator and bereavement support assistant will send a letter and leaflet outlining additional support available 3 months post-bereavement

5.9 Bereavement support group

- 5.9.1 The service offers a more structured bereavement support group (Appendix four) led by the registered counsellor and one volunteer. This will run for 6 consecutive weeks and is available for up to 10 clients at a time. It is to the discretion of the registered counsellor who is appropriate to attend the group.

5.10 Bereavement support drop-in

- 5.10.1 The registered counsellor and one volunteer hold a weekly bereavement support drop-in group. This is open to individuals across North Lincolnshire
- 5.10.2 The purpose of the drop-in group is to offer an open forum for discussion and help support individuals in the wider community not necessarily known to the specialist palliative care team and/or hospice
- 5.10.3 The bereavement support drop-in group is held on a Thursday from 2pm - 4pm
- 5.9.4 If any further support is required, it may be necessary to refer to the Palliative Care Social Worker, the clinical psychologist or other organisations, for example, CRISIS support.

6 CRUSE bereavement support alliance

- 6.1 The Lindsey Lodge Hospice counselling and bereavement support team currently have an alliance with CRUSE bereavement support
- 6.2 The Lindsey Lodge Hospice counselling and bereavement support team currently receive referrals for those clients at the top of the CRUSE bereavement support service waiting list
- 6.3 The number of clients taken from the waiting list is to the discretion of the registered counsellor to ensure capacity and quality of work is not compromised

7 Measuring Performance

- 7.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored via the Lindsey Lodge Hospice reporting process in relation to counselling and bereavement support incidents

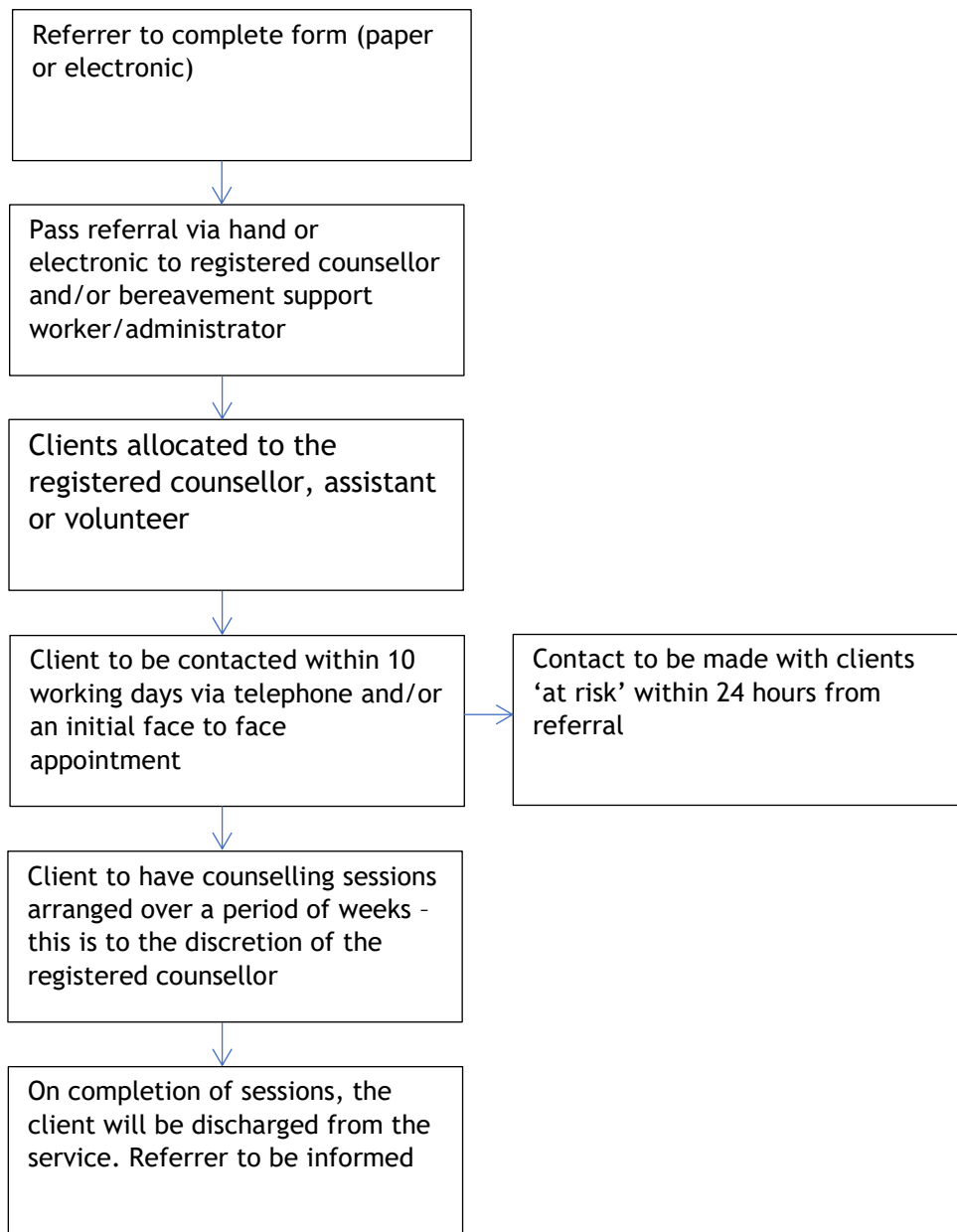
8 Audit

- 8.1 Audits and data collection of clients accessing the counselling and bereavement support service will be completed through collection of qualitative (satisfaction questionnaire, appendix three) and quantitative (monthly data review) feedback and monitoring of incident reports
- 8.2 Regular one to one sessions will take place between the register counsellor, wellbeing centre manager and director of patient and nursing services to monitor service delivery and development

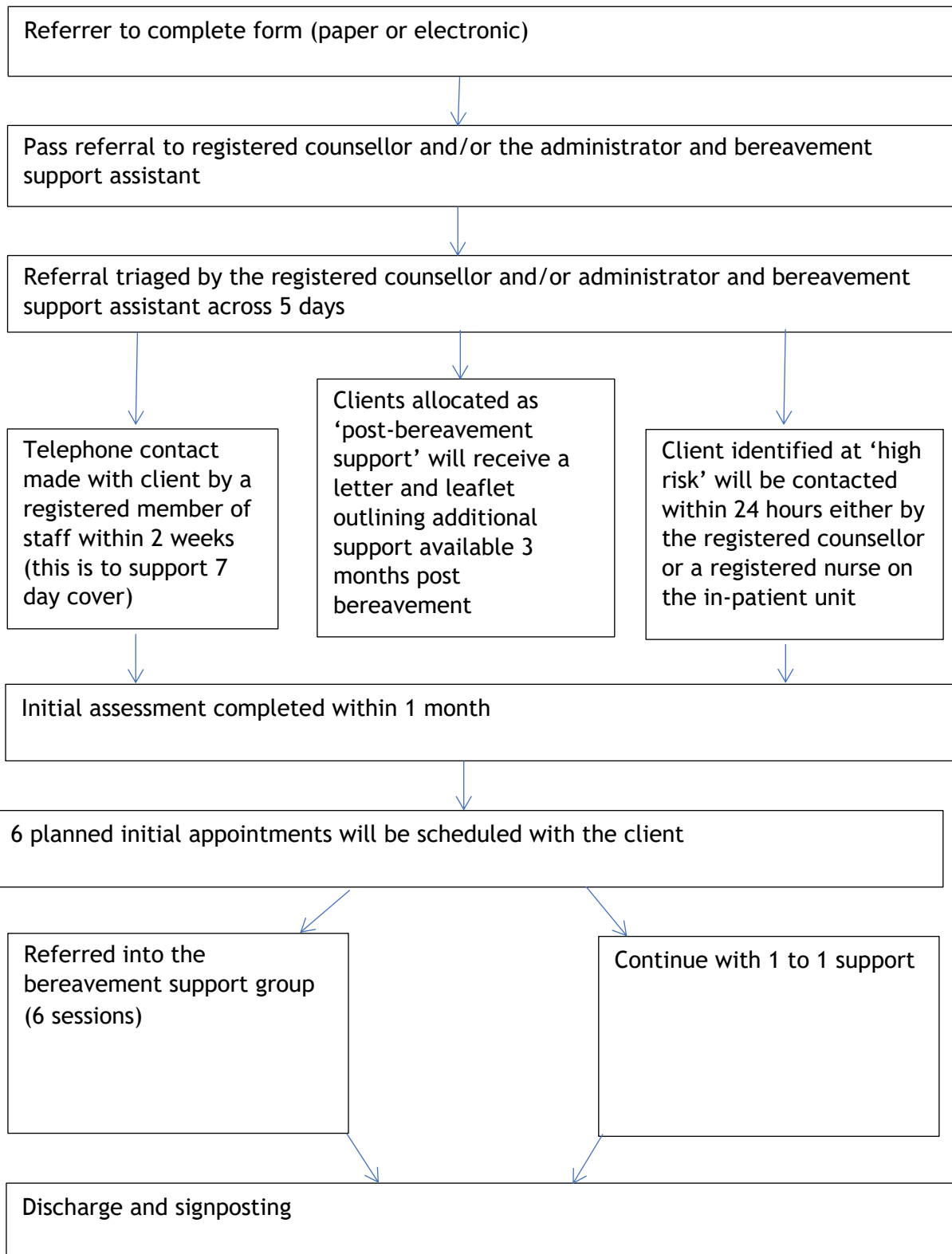
9 Review

- 9.1 The Director of Patient and Nursing services, Wellbeing Centre manager and registered Counsellor will review this policy yearly or sooner if required following changes to any local or national frameworks or changes required to clinical practice following audit findings

Appendix One - Counselling support referral process



Appendix Two - Pre and post bereavement referral process



Appendix three - Patient experience questionnaire

PATIENT EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us improve our service by answering some questions about the service you have received. We are interested in your opinions, whether they are positive and negative.

- How likely are you to recommend our service to family/friends?

Yes definitely	Unsure	No
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- Did you get help and support at a time when you needed it most?
- Was it too early or too late?
- On reflection did you get the help that mattered to you?
- Did the therapist/support worker understand your feelings?
- Did you have confidence in your therapist and his/her skills and techniques?
- Any other comments?

Appendix four - Bereavement support (6 week group proforma)



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT - 6 WEEK GROUP

STRUCTURE

WEEK 1 – Getting to know people

- Introductions
- Everyone shares stories
- Discussion of expectations for group
- Overview of the grieving process
- ***Ask to bring picture of person who has died, to the next session.***

WEEK 2 - Stories

- Relaxation exercise
- Check in with everyone – how has the week been?
- Share pictures and stories
- Explore any feeling this exercise brings up
- Ask people to answer the following questions:-
What if?
Why?

WEEK 3 - Issues

- Relaxation exercise
- Check in with everyone – what issues were raised by last week's two questions?
- Ask what people would like to say to their loved one if they were still able to?
- Discuss coping with emotions people may experience from this and from grieving process in general.
- ***Ask to bring in an item of significant to them in relation to the person who has died for the next session***

WEEK 4 - Unfinished business

- Relaxation exercise

- Check in with everyone - how has the week been? Did last week's discussions raise any issues?
- Discuss object brought in and feelings that may arise
- Discuss unfinished business ?
- Ask people what they would have liked to have said to the person who has died, but didn't perhaps get the chance?

WEEK 5 – The future...?

- Relaxation exercise
- Check in with everyone
- What are people's thoughts and feelings on the future?
- How has the group experience been for everyone?
- Has it changed their feelings in any way?
- Has their grief changed, and if so in what ways?
- Discuss what new roles people are learning / finding difficult.

WEEK 6 – Where now?

- Relaxation exercise
- Check in with everyone – any issues raised from last session?
- Look at what has been achieved
- Discuss the importance of memories
- Look at where people go from here – Reflections/counselling/psychologists/no further help wanted etc.
- Saying goodbye and how to put coping strategies into place
- Ritual of remembrance if appropriate.
- Bereavement questionnaire

Appendix five - Referral form



Family Support Team

Name of patient/client	
Date of Birth	
NHS No	
Address	
Contact Telephone No	
GP	
Service Requested	Family Support <input type="checkbox"/> Bereavement Support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reason for referral	
<p>.</p>	

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Any identified risks?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Any alcohol or drug misuse?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a history or concern for their mental health?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are any other professionals involved?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the patient/client aware the referral is being made and given consent?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signed	_____	
Print Name	_____	
Title	_____	
Telephone No	_____	
Email	_____	

Date received	
Action taken	

Please return this form to:
 Family Support Team
 Lindsey Lodge Hospice
 Burringham Road
 Scunthorpe
 North Lincolnshire DN17 2AA

If you would like to discuss your referral please contact the Family Support Team on 01724 270835
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Lead Author: Maureen Georgiou, Sarah Hodge, Carolyn Connor				
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